

## **Report of the Special Services Director**

In 2015, we have had some exciting and new opportunities. We welcomed new members to the special services department including Laura McCarthy, occupational therapist, and several para-educators.

In October, Pettinelli and Associates, who originally installed our playground equipment, removed, re-oriented, and added playground equipment and a wheelchair accessible path from the gate to the new equipment. The preschool/elementary playground is now accessible to students in wheelchairs and/or standers. We were able to provide this through the IDEA grant.

The special education department and district administrative team analyzed the data from the NHDOE special education parent involvement survey completed in 2014. Based on the feedback from the parent involvement survey, we changed our format for presenting evaluations to parents and now send home evaluations ahead of meetings to allow parents to read and consider before meetings. We also organized and hosted a “Basic Special Education Rights” workshop presented by Parent Information Center in March 2015. Lastly, at the Ellis Open House Community Fair this past October, we asked parents to complete a survey to gain parents’ feedback about what kind of special services parent school partnership would be helpful to them and in what they would participate. In 2016, the NHDOE will again administer the special education parent involvement survey again. We appreciate the responses from parents on this survey and listen to the information parents share with us.

Annual NHDOE compliance reports were submitted in a timely manner. NHDOE provided notice that the district has met Indicator 11 requirements for “Timeliness of Initial Evaluation.” NHDOE Post-School Outcome Surveys were sent out again this year. The information regarding how students are doing after leaving high school is valuable information and we appreciate the feedback.

In order to build our capacity and provide more support by using district staff rather than contracted services, we sent staff to various trainings including Crisis Intervention Institute (CPI) Train-the-Trainer and Social Thinking by nationally renowned author and speaker, Michelle Garcia Winner.

As one thinks about the population that Special Services serve, it is helpful to know some of the statistics. At Ellis Elementary School (pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade), special education students comprise twelve percent (12%), Section 504 students comprise nine percent (9%), and English Language Learners comprise zero percent (0%) of the student population. Of the Fremont School District students attending Sanborn Regional High School, sixteen percent (16%) are students served through special education, eleven percent (11%) have Section 504 plans, and zero percent (0%) are English Language Learners. Across the Fremont School District (ages 3-21), sixteen percent (16%) of students are served through Special Services.

It continues to be a pleasure to serve the students and the community of Fremont.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa McKeon